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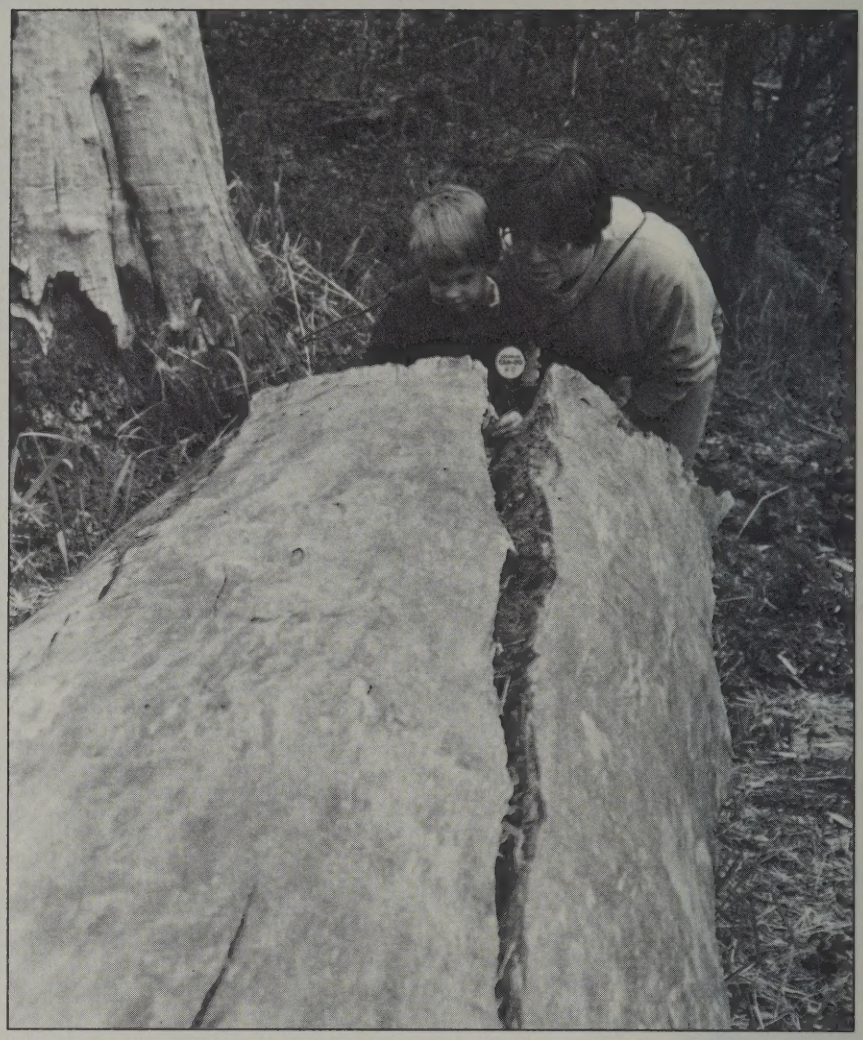
Issue 31 July 1991

Arctic peregrines prosper in northern Alaska

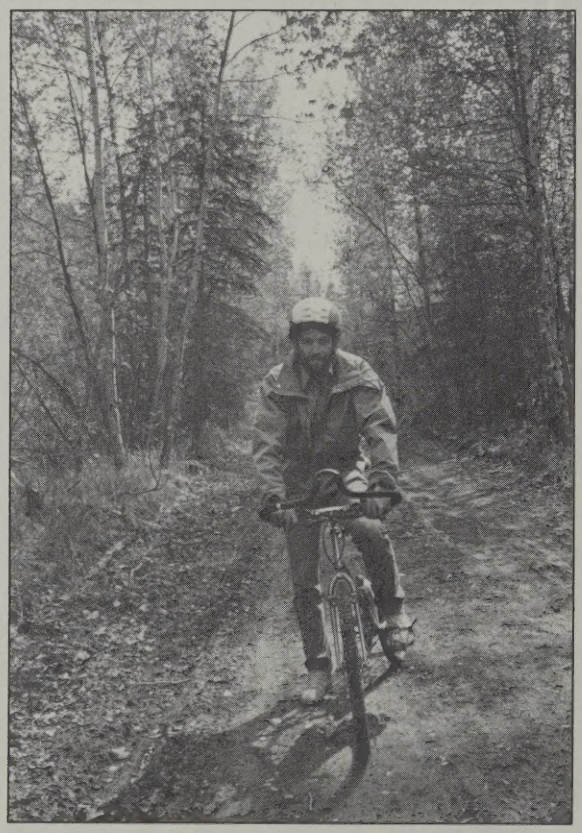
A closely related species, the Peeles peregrine, above, resides year-round in the Aleutian Islands. Story on page 4.

u.s. department of the interior • bureau of land management

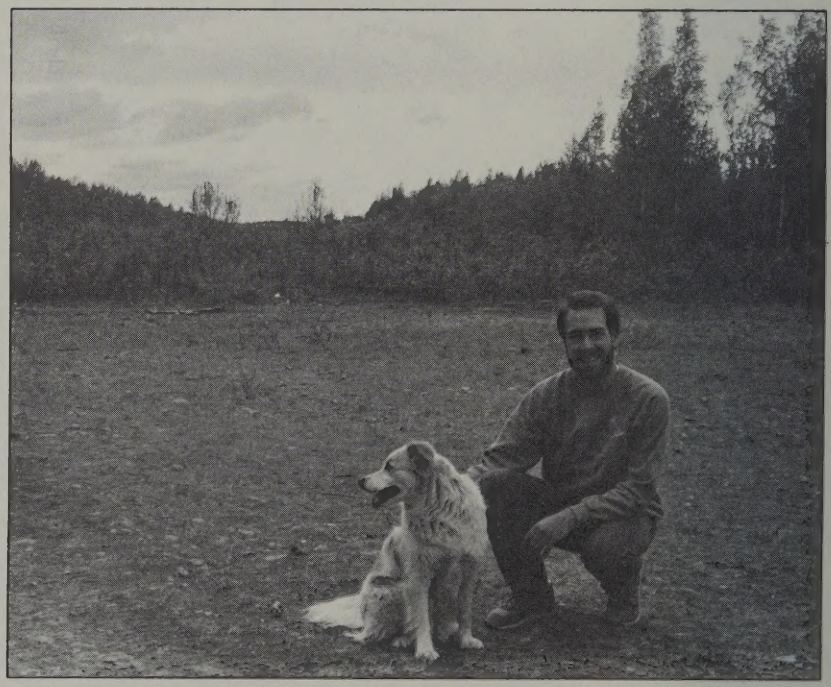
Campbell Tract is a special place for Dave and Gayle Eckert. Here they're collecting trash from the outer reaches of the woods.



Susan Rogers and Mark Jablonaski look for lichens and insects in this log.



During patrols of Campbell Tract, BLM natural resource specialist Jake Schlapfer tells people about the new leash policy that prohibits unleashed animals.



David Singyke and Sasha. Walking dogs is one of the most popular activities on Campbell Tract.

For a 'wild' time, try the BLM Campbell Tract in Anchorage

Peering down the secluded trail, Joette and Gene Storm spotted what appeared to be a large black dog ambling toward them through the distant underbrush. Bartles, their oversized puppy, could hardly contain his excitement. But as Bartles' potential playmate got a little closer, the Storms yelled in unison, "It's a bear!"

They hushed Bartles and moved quietly in the other direction. "As big as I think that bear was, I didn't want it any closer." said Joette.

While it's not unusual to see bears on the outskirts of Anchorage, it may be hard to realize there's a healthy black bear population and other types of wildlife living a semi-wilderness existence within southeast Anchorage at the Campbell Tract.

The Storms have been coming to the 730-acre tract for years, and it wasn't the first time they'd encountered a bear.

The Campbell Tract is a haven for dog walkers, and it's beginning to attract other recreationists. Its numerous trails connect with the nearby Bicentennial Park, and summer is when more people seem to be drawn to the tract. BLM outdoor recreation specialist Jake Schlapfer, who patrols the Campbell Tract says, "You bump into people running, riding horseback, biking, berry picking, and watching spawning salmon, birds and other wildlife."

Storm's longtime acquaintance with Campbell Tract began in the 70's when she was employed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), the federal agency managing the area. Like others, she became involved with Campbell Tract through environmental activities often conducted on the tract by private organizations, the Anchorage School District and BLM.

Kathie Kunz with Trailside Discovery, a nature education program for children, says her organization was able to capitalize on a unique educational opportunity at Campbell Tract last year. She said, "We found a dead moose. So throughout the summer we were able to show the kids this decaying animal and explain how it related to the food chain and nature's life cycle."

A friend of Kuntz's, Sue Post, said, "I grew up on the Campbell Tract. . . . I always come here with my dog. It's got everything—a stream, trails, animals. It's even a place where you can fly kites."

Recreation on the tract is not restricted to the public. BLM employees who work at Campbell Tract facility readily enjoy its unspoiled beauty. The tract contains a mix of habitats including spruce and birch forests, bogs and a riparian area along the Campbell Creek, which intersects the area. Employees often jog and hit golf balls during lunch time. Early in May a new employee saw a newborn baby calf emerging from the woods still wet and wobbly.

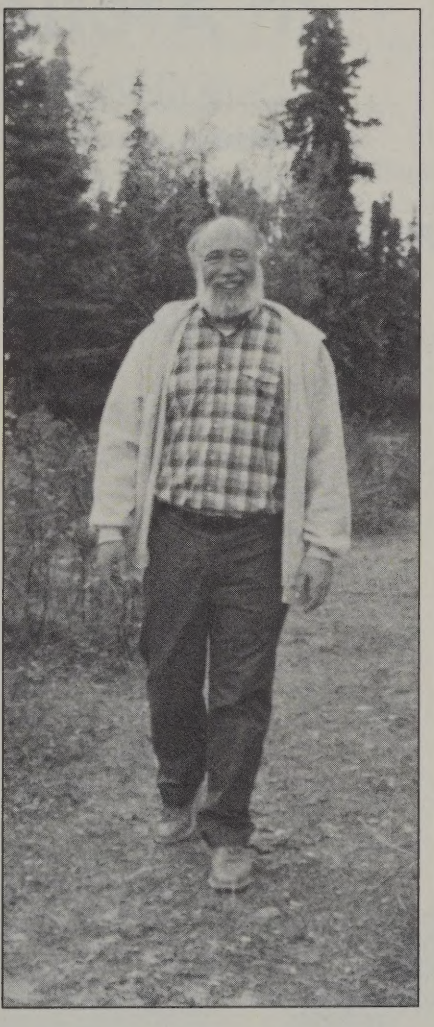
Although BLM is enforcing a new policy for keeping pets leashed while on the Tract, Schlapfer says, "We hope this doesn't discourage anyone from coming out here. It's for everyone's safety, and too the BLM wants to be in accordance with municipal and federal regulations."

Dave and Gayle Eckert were recently at Campbell Tract picking up trash. Dave said of their favorite retreat, "It's nicer than Kincaid Park [a well-used park in Anchorage]. It's more wild and not too many people know about it."

BLM wants more people to know about the "wild" Campbell Tract. Visitors can access the Tract from the Campbell Airstrip Road or at the BLM Campbell Tract Facility off Abbott Loop Road. For a convenient place to recreate within the confines of Anchorage, Campbell Tract is a hard place to beat.

For recreation information about the Campbell Tract, call Jake Schlapfer at 267-1293.

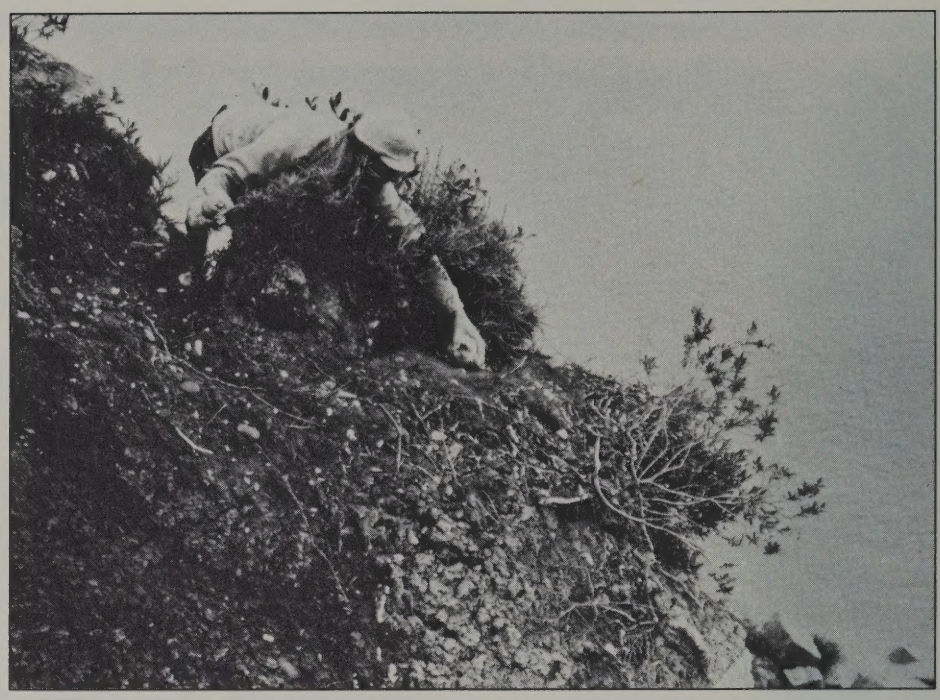
—Danielle Allen



For years 'Yogi' Neilsen has enjoyed walks at the Campbell Tract .

Peregrines make a big comeback in Arctic

Once headed for extinction, the Arctic peregrine falcon population has increased to an all-time high in northern Alaska



BLM biologist Jim Silva balances cautiously on the edge of a bluff over the Sagavanirktok River as he retrieves two young Arctic peregrine falcons for banding and weighing.

Jim Silva spent the last 11 years working in remote areas of northern Alaska, areas few people even get to see. His main interest is birds of prey, and much of his work as a wildlife biologist with the BLM Arctic District involved the endangered Arctic peregrine falcon.

"Soon after I came here the peregrine recovery plan for Alaska was formulated," Silva said. At that time there were approximately 24 pairs of peregrines counted on the Colville River and four pairs on the Sagavanirktok River.

The Arctic peregrines had been placed on the national endangered species list in 1970 after they disappeared from the east and west coasts of the Lower 48 states. A few remained in remote areas, but extinction was a real possibility.

In 1982, a group of biologists and managers from the State of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bureau of Land Management, and the National Park Service developed the Peregrine Falcon Recovery Plan for Alaska. Private consultants and university staffs also participated.

The recovery plan outlined ways for natural resource managers to reduce impacts. It also defined the numbers and conditions that would determine when recovery was successful. Reaching those goals would affect the bird's eligibility to be removed from the endangered and threatened lists.

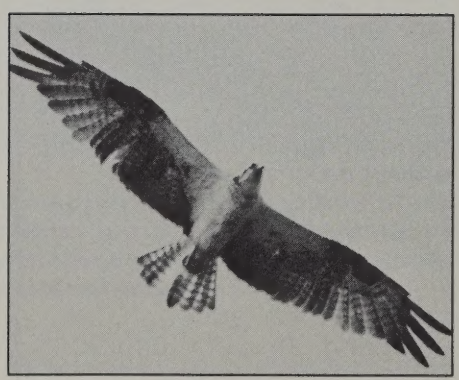
From historical data, the group decided that 36 nesting pairs and 50 young would be a healthy population for the two rivers.

Last year biologists counted 61 pairs and 122 young on the North Slope.

"That's more than called for in the recovery plan," Silva said, "and the habitat can support more birds.

"I think all the efforts to protect and nurture the species have paid off."

The BLM manages much of the land along the Colville and Sagavanirktok rivers. Arctic peregrines migrate to northern Alaska every spring to nest and hatch their young. In the fall they fly to traditional wintering areas in



Mexico and South America.

Over the years, BLM biologists have been assisting U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists with banding and tracking the nesting peregrine adults and chicks. They also collect important data such as the number and location of nests, and the number of eggs and offspring. They take blood samples and weigh the chicks. The collective information gives biologists a clearer picture of the health of both individuals and the population. It also tells Arctic District resource specialists where the nests are located so permitted actions can avoid those areas.

The first substantial increases in Arctic peregrine falcon population began to occur in the mid-1980s. According to Silva, several factors contributed. "DDT use was banned in the United States, although it is still used in South America. Now egg shells are stronger, and more healthy chicks are hatched. Biologists down south have captive-bred peregrine falcons and then reintroduced the healthy chicks to natural locations. This procedure has raised the population.

"Biologists in Alaska, in turn, have provided more protection for the birds during the Alaskan portion of their life cycle. All these actions combined to produce a larger, healthier population."

Since there was no degraded habitat and the peregrines enjoyed a wide range of nesting sites on the bluffs along the Colville and Sagavanirktok rivers, Silva said, most of BLM's actions were aimed at protecting the birds from disturbances.

"A lot of people use the northern lands," he said, "oil companies, government agencies, researchers and guides and commercial outfitters. All those require permits, and we write stipulations into those permits so they won't disturb the birds during critical periods. For instance, when the paleontologists from the university [of Alaska] were digging on the dinosaur site on the Colville River, we had a biologist there to ensure the birds weren't disturbed. In their case, they were near a nest, but around the corner out of sight, which allowed them to work without disturbing the birds. However, we still limited them to walking past the nesting area only twice a day."

Perhaps the largest group of users is people who come to the public lands for recreation. "We have people rafting the river, and they sometimes get out to hike. The best hiking is along the rocky ridges, where peregrines nest. Subsistence hunters and fishermen also use the area. None of these users need permits, so we have to rely on education in one form or another to get the conservation message out to those users."

Silva says that the increase in peregrines is nationwide, mostly through reintroduction in the Lower 48 states. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reclassified the Arctic peregrine from endangered to threatened in the mid-1980s, and he foresees that they will remove it from the threatened list within the next several years.

"But that doesn't mean we can ignore their welfare. Right now, with the most optimistic view, there are approximately 100 to 150 pairs of adult Arctic peregrines nesting in Alaska, and it wouldn't take much to decimate those numbers."

—Sharon Durgan Wilson

Silva holds a peregrine fledgling after banding its leg for future tracking.

BLM emplo
Alaska sh
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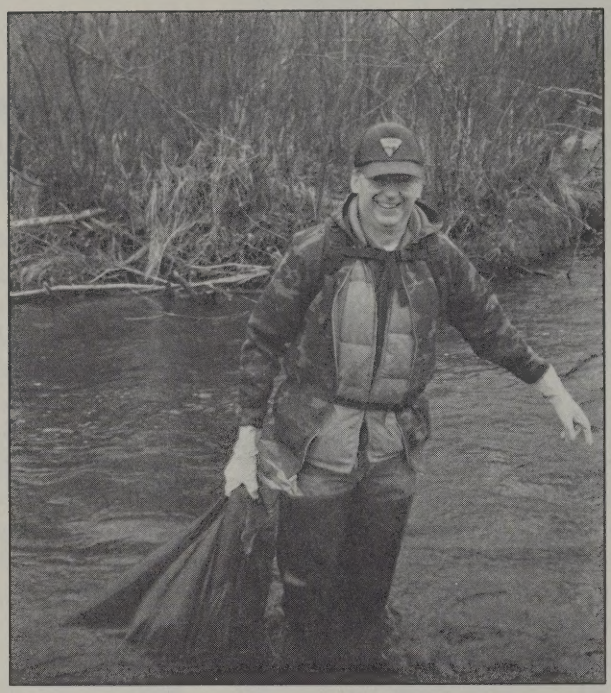


Wayne Boden, BLM Alaska deputy state director for conveyances, hauls another bag of trash out of Ship Creek in Anchorage.

Jeff Doty and Pete Peschaug of the Copper River Native Association and Barb Doty and Anna Mae Peschaug of Kenny Lake League, a community group, load trash into the BLM truck for the 40-mile trip to the landfill.

Helping Fairbanks' summer spr

The annual Fairbanks cleanup was late this long time to melt. BLM employees got into th from University Avenue, Boat Street and the grubby clothes to scour the roadsides for ciga trash. Afterward, they celebrated in the parki month, three BLM smokejumpers did some w Valley Fairgrounds. They cut down trees that them up and cleared the brush.

Copper Valley Cleanup

Many employees of BLM's Glennallen Dist weekend to participate in the annual area clea Chamber of Commerce. BLM donated three b use and provided vehicles to haul trash from the district's employees were involved in the third were in Fairbanks that morning.

Fisheries biologist Frank Bird and outdoor and transported trash from the Kenny Lake a from both Copper Center and Silver Springs. old Sasha Mushovic a lesson in civic duty and downtown Glennallen. Realty specialist Mik Gakona on Sunday, finding a spot workers in he picks up trash each year.

"Someone put a garbage can there, and peo The trash just piles up."

Grubbing for Anchorage trash

In downtown Anchorage, a group of 35 en Ship Creek and its banks, as part of Anchora

This year's picking resulted in 15 one-ton t bowling ball, shopping carts and even a fire

Meanwhile Ned Darling, facilities manage cleanup effort at Campbell Tract, where 45 e flows onto BLM property. They collected en

All Anchorage participants received passes cleanup and celebration May 18 at Valley of unique "finds" for the event, where prizes w

ees around ow they in America'

ce-up

ar because of record snowfall which took a pirit on May 21 and collected 43 bags of trash M office site. About 20 people turned out in te butts, styrofoam cups, beer cans and other lot with a large barbecue. Earlier in the k at a public campground next to the Tanana ere injured by the winter's heavy snows, cut

—Sue Mitchell

Cheryl Anzivino and Ralph Ahgupuk of the Alaska State Office in Anchorage grab fresh trash bags and head up Ship Creek.

Office donated time on a windy May p sponsored by the Greater Copper Valley es of trash bags to be distributed for cleanup lying communities. More than one third of ort—not too bad, considering that the other

reation specialist Janelle Eklund picked up . New archaeologist Pat McCoy hauled trash nd use planner K.J. Mushovic gave 6-month- ok her along while picking up trash in cGinty collected 34 bags of garbage in at area had missed on Saturday. It's where

assume it gets picked up, but it doesn't.

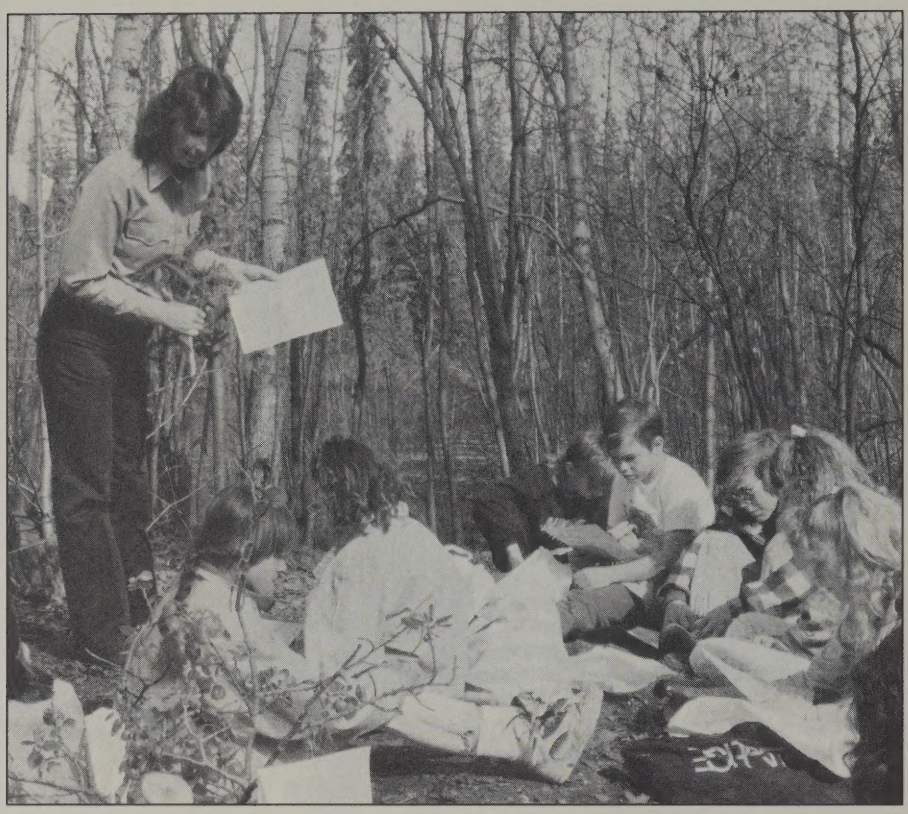
—K.J. Mushovic

siastic BLM employees collected trash from s annual spring cleanup.
kloads of debris and such rare finds as a lrant.
BLM's Campbell Tract offices, headed a loyees scoured Campbell Creek where it gh trash to fill a 5-ton truck.
attend the Anchorage Waterways Council Moon Park. They brought along their given out for the most interesting finds.

—Jim Mroczek

At the Tanana Valley State Fair Campground, BLM Alaska Fire Service smokejumpers Mike Terien and Erik Pyne haul away trees killed by winter snows.

Fairbanks, Anchorage kids learn about their Alaskan environments



During Outdoor Education Days, BLM Natural Resource Specialist Barb Masinton teaches Fairbanks sixth graders about plant identification.

A Fairbanks first

The joyful shrieks of children replaced the sound of snow blowers. In the roped-off visitors' parking lot, children designated as salmon ran to avoid other children who represented bears, fishermen, waterfalls and eagles. The salmon kids had to first reach the ocean, then return to their spawning grounds without being caught. While having fun, the children were learning about the obstacles faced by salmon in their life cycle and about BLM's management of salmon habitat.

Despite record snowfalls and a Chena River that threatened to overflow its banks, BLM held the first-ever Fairbanks Outdoor Education Days this May. More than 230 sixth-grade students and their teachers attended the three-day event.

Thirty instructors and assistant instructors as well as 22 volunteers, all from BLM, devoted from two hours to three days of their time to making this educational event a success.

Before starting along a trail consisting of six teaching stations, the students listened to two smoke jumpers from the Alaska Fire Service tell them what it's like to jump from airplanes and fight fires. The kids wanted to know what fire fighters eat and how much they get paid for fighting fires.

At one station, a group of kids learned how to read maps and use compasses to travel across country without getting lost. At another station, BLM employees taught kids how to identify different types of trees. Two campsites illustrated the differences between minimum impact camping and irresponsible camping. While several children squealed with glee at finding gold-painted lead "nuggets" while panning some gravel, others wandered around the grounds of the BLM office building, following "animal tracks"painted on the parking lot. The tracks eventually led to a silhouette of the animal, or sometimes a hide or a skull hidden behind a tree. A biologist accompanying the trackers explained the habits and characteristics of the animal.

Judging from the obvious joy of the students and the compliments from their teachers, Fairbanks Outdoor Days was a great success. The people involved say they look forward to doing it again next year.

—Sue Mitchell

Fly time wows Anchorage sixth graders

For the 16th year since it started the event, BLM's Anchorage District Office went all out for environmental education at Outdoor Week staged at the BLM-managed Campbell Tract. Perhaps the most talked-about event this year was the new learning station called "Fly Time." At the Fly Time station, BLM employees Connie Lewis, Gail Ozmina and Jim Mroczek taught hundreds of sixth graders how to tie flies to use as fishing lures for trips they may take this summer.

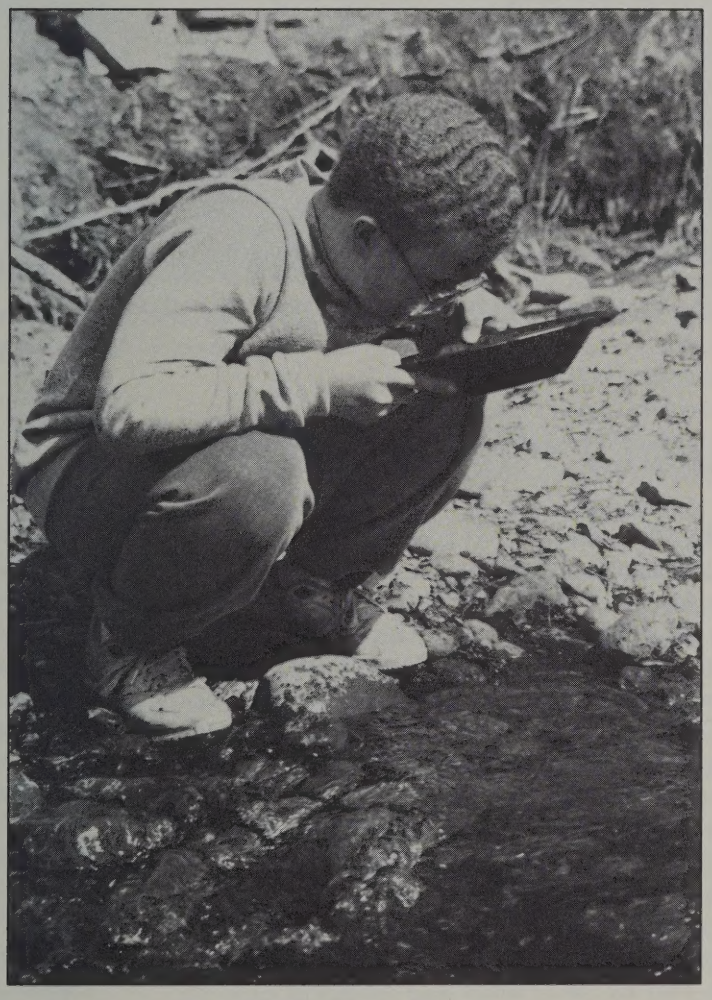
BLM archaeologist Julie Steele, assisted by Cooperative Education Student Donna Reading-Gubitosa oversaw mini-digs. Richard Stephenson and Stephanie Clusiau put the kids through their paces at the BLM map and compass station. Karen Collie taught gold panning.

Other agencie, including the Minerals Management Service, U.S. Weather Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service joined BLM to conduct a wide variety of activities with environmental and natural resource themes.

Outdoor Week seems to bring out enthusiasm in both workers and students. "I see this program getting bigger and better each year," said BLM wildlife biologist Van Waggoner, who has been Outdoor Week coordinator for the last three years, working closely with the Anchorage School District's science consultant, Emma Walton. This year 2300 students participated.

—Danielle Allen

BLM visual information specialist Jim Mroczek helps a student make a fishing fly with a fly-tying vice. They're using a coho hook and bucktail hair to create a coho fly.



Anchorage sixth grader checks his gold pan to see if he's found any flakes of gold in the gravels of Campbell Creek.

Right: BLM archaeologist Julie Steele coaches students who are working on a simulated dig.

Workers build a temporary bridge somewhere in Canada. More than 200 permanent bridges were eventually built between Dawson Creek, B. C., and Delta Junction, Alaska.

BLM helps celebrate Alaska Highway 50th

Canada and Alaska are combining forces to celebrate next year the 50th Anniversary of the completion of the Alaska Highway. This highway, still the only one linking the Lower 48 states and Alaska, was built by thousands of U.S. soldiers and contractors in a massive construction project during World War II.

An organization called the Great Alaska Highways Society has been set up to organize the celebration. The Bureau of Land Management in Alaska is a member of an interagency committee supporting the society, and the BLM public affairs office in Fairbanks is designing, editing and coordinating the society's bimonthly newsletter.

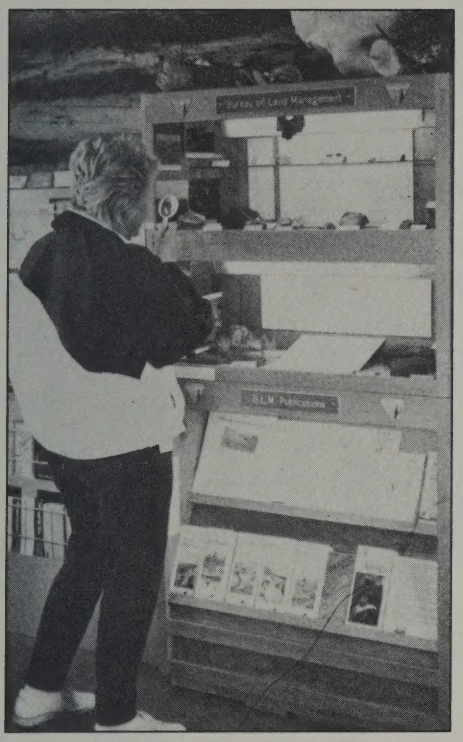
They're encouraging special celebrations in almost every community of Alaska, the Yukon Territory and British Columbia. And there are plenty to celebrate. Besides the Alaska Highway anniversary, 1991 also marks numerous other anniversaries, including:

- the 125th anniversary of the purchase of Alaska from Russia
- the 50th anniversary of the construction of the CANOL pipeline
- the 40th anniversary of the construction of the Seward Highway between Anchorage and Seward, Alaska
- the 75th anniversary of the founding of the Alaska Territorial School of Agriculture and School of Mines (the present University of Alaska)
- the establishment of Big Delta Army Air Force Base (now Fort Greely) and Eielson Air Force Base in Anchorage.
- the confederation of Canada
- the commemoration of the World War II Lend-Lease transfer of war planes, when planes were flown by U.S. pilots to Fairbanks, picked up by Russian pilots and flown to Russia for fighting the Germans during World War II.

Thousands of people are preparing to celebrate and renew old ties with Alaska. There will be a year-long calendar of special events and memorial programs along the entire length of the Alaska Highway. If you would like to receive a copy of the newsletter or contribute a news item, call (907) 474-2231 or telefax to (907) 474-2238.

—Sharon Durgan Wilson/ JaneMangus

Visitors love BLM's new minerals display



Pat O'Connor from Niagara Falls N.Y. appreciates good specimens.

"Ooh, look at this! You can see the gold flecks," exclaimed Andrew Todd, of Lancashire, England, to his wife, Dorothy.

Visitors to the Greater Copper Basin Visitor Center in Glennallen this summer have been delighted to discover a unique minerals display provided by the Bureau of Land Management.

Andrew relinquished the attached hand lens to Dorothy and went on to examine other specimens.

"Bureau of Land Management....is that the national government?" asked Andrew.

"Yes, it is," answered Carolyn Nelson, manager of the Visitor Center, who has become quite knowledgeable about BLM activities in the Glennallen District.

"We have had a lot of interest in the display," said Nelson. "In fact, we're planning to build some additional cabinets along the walls, and if we could be sure we could get this display every year, we'd custom-build the cabinets to accommodate it."

Gary Brougham, Chief of BLM's Mineral Assessment Branch in the Division of Mineral Resources, couldn't be more pleased about the public's interest or the opportunity to educate them about the Bureau's minerals program. Brougham is the mastermind behind the display, conceived to educate the public about BLM's involvement in minerals management.

"The Minerals Management Service and the U.S.Geological Survey have booths and displays at Oil and Gas meetings and conventions, and even at functions like Fur Rendezvous," noted Brougham. "Most people think of them. when they think of minerals. Since it didn't seem to me like very many people, even in Alaska, were aware of BLM's role in minerals management, the display appeared to be an inexpensive way to let people know what we do."

The unit had been on display at the Bureau's Anchorage District Office, but Brougham welcomed the chance to lend it to the Greater Copper Basin Visitor Center, where tourists traveling the Glenn and Richardson Highways enjoy taking a break. The display will remain at the rustic log building through the summer, then will go to Anchorage for assembly at the October Alaska Miners' Convention.

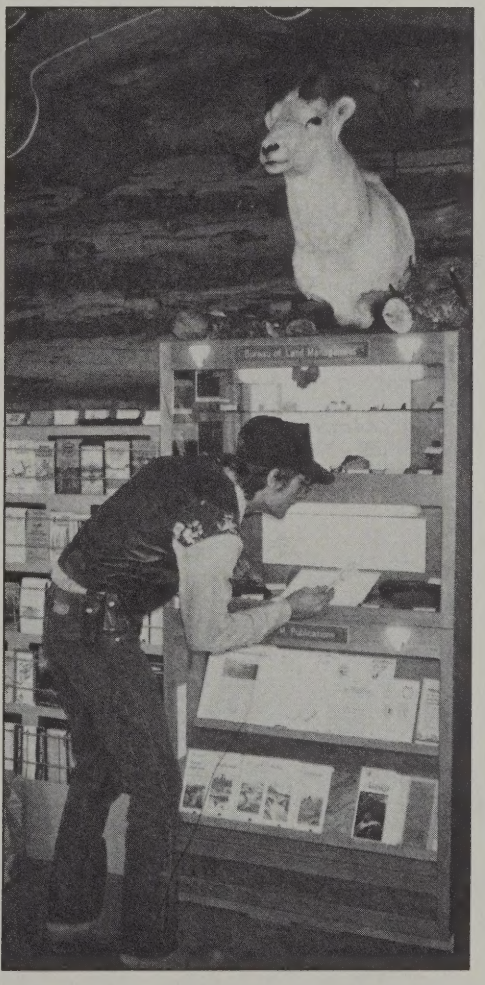
Brougham designed the booth to come apart for easy travel. Geologists John Rego with the BLM Glennallen District Office and Suzanne McCarthy with the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve identified the mineral specimens found in the Glennallen District.

Specimens include jadeite, agate, garnet, pyrite, a fossilized trilobite and gold. They can be viewed up close by using a hand lens attached to the display with a chain and velcro. The Division of Minerals is in the process of publishing a new brochure that will serve as a "geologic milepost" of the Denali Highway, expected to be a popular item with many tourists preparing to embark on the highway en route to Denali National Park after leaving Glennallen. And that's good news to Brougham, who feels that the Bureau "needs to toot its own horn."

It's good news for Pat and Charlie O'Connor of Niagara Falls, too.

"Come over and see this, Charlie!" calls Pat. "This is a really nice piece of jasper!"

—K.J. Mushovic



Ken Stump of Palmer, Alaska, examines a rock sample with the magnifying glass.

frontier flashes

BLM has published **four new scientific reports**: *Distribution, Movements and Seasonal Use Areas of Caribou in the White Mountains National Recreation Area, Alaska, 1982-1988* (Open File Report 29); *Ground Brood Counts to Estimate Waterfowl Populations in BLM's Kobuk District, Alaska: 1990 Progress Report* (Open File Report 32); *Movements and Distribution of Radio-Collared Caribou in the Buckland Valley and Nulato Hills, Winter of 1989-90* (Open File Report 33); *Oil and Gas Development on Alaska's North Slope: Past Results and Future Prospects* (Open File Report 34). Available while supplies last from the BLM Alaska State Office, Public Affairs, 222 W. 7th Ave., #13, Anchorage AK 99513. Phone (907) 271-5555.

BLM and the Lions Club co-sponsored a **Wild Horse Adoption Ceremony** June 12 in Fairbanks. Certificates of title for Happy, Adolph, Scooter and Alvarez were presented to the 124th Cavalry Unit Explorer Post 47, Boy Scouts of America by Jerry McGee, wild horse coordinator for the BLM Steese/White Mountains district.

In May **Soviet and American boy Scouts assembled 328 strong at BLM-Alaska's Campbell Tract** Facility in Anchorage. Sixty-nine scouts from the Russian city of Magadan and a small village joined the Alaskan Denali District boy scouts at their two-day jamboree. The BLM Anchorage District issues a permit to the boy scouts each year for use of the Campbell Tract.

The **Alyeska Pipeline Service Company donated $10,000 to BLM Alaska Resources Apprenticeship Programs** (RAPs). These funds will enable four Alaska Native youths to participate in this year's summer program.

Two Alaska BLM employees received the **Department of Interior Valor Award** for rescuing four people rafting on the Gulkana Wild and Scenic River. The prestigious award was presented to co-op student Jake Schlapfer and seasonal employee Sean Regain.

Two Glennallen **high school students funded through a Job Training Partnership Act grant** are working this summer at the BLM Glennallen District Office. Students David Lappi and Jeremy Beshaw will work 100 hours.

At Glenallen the BLM district office issued a permit for a **Canadian movie company to shoot scenes on location** in Southcentral Alaska for a production called "Leaving Normal."

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